APPENDIX C
SPECIFICALLY RECOMMENDED MITIGATION MEASURES

The Specifically Recommended Mitigation Measures are a list of measures or techniques that would be applied to mitigate specifically identified impact types or impact locations on a case by case basis after initial impacts are identified. The purpose of specifically recommended mitigation measures is to reduce the identified impact, resulting in a lower level of impact or what is referred to as residual impact. The Specifically Recommended Mitigation Measures are preliminary, and not committed to by NorthWestern, until discussions are held on this subject with the MDEQ and other agencies.

1. In specific areas where soils and vegetation are particularly sensitive to disturbance, existing access roads will not be widened or otherwise upgraded for construction and maintenance, except in areas where repairs are necessary to make existing roads passable.

2. In areas of sensitive features to avoid disturbance, access roads will not be constructed. Rather, construction and maintenance traffic will use existing roads or cross-country access routes (including the right-of-way). To minimize ground disturbance, construction traffic routes must be clearly marked with temporary markers such as easily visible flagging. An authorized officer must approve the construction routes or other means of avoidance in advance of use.

3. To minimize ground disturbance and/or reduce scarring (visual contrast) of the landscape, the alignment of any new access roads or cross-country route will follow the landform contours in designated areas where practicable, providing that such alignment does not impact resource values additionally.

4. To limit new or improved accessibility into the area, all new access undesired or not required for maintenance will be closed using the most effective and least environmentally damaging methods appropriate to that area with concurrence of the landowner or land manager.

5. To minimize ground disturbance, operational conflicts and/or visual contrast, the tower design will be modified or an alternative tower type will be used.

6. Where feasible, to minimize sensitive feature disturbance and/or reduce visual contrast, in designated areas structures will be placed so as to avoid sensitive features such as, but not limited to, riparian areas, water courses and cultural sites and/or to allow conductors to clearly span the features, within limits of standard tower design.

7. To reduce visual contrast and/or potential operational conflicts, standard tower design will be modified to correspond with spacing of existing transmission line structures where feasible and within limits of standard tower design. The normal span will be modified to correspond with existing towers, but not necessarily at every location.

8. To reduce visual impacts, potential impacts on recreation values and safety, at highway, canyon and trail crossings, towers are to be placed at the maximum feasible distance from the crossing within limits of standard tower design.

9. With the exception of emergency repair situations, construction, restoration, maintenance and termination activities in designated areas will be modified or curtailed during sensitive periods (e.g., nesting and breeding periods) for candidate, proposed threatened and endangered, or other sensitive

animal species. An authorized officer would approve sensitive periods and areas of concern in advance of construction or maintenance.

10. Where feasible, existing landscape features would be utilized to span the conductor over riparian scrub-shrub wetlands to avoid cutting woody vegetation.

11. To reduce visual contrast in areas where overstory vegetation is removed for access, structure pads, or conductor clearance, the clearing edges will be feathered to give a natural appearance.

12. Marking devices will be placed on shield wires in area of known high avian use such as river crossings and wetland areas.

13. Construction and maintenance will be subjected to timing limitations as proposed by land management agencies were feasible in areas known to be sensitive to wildlife species.

14. Preconstruction surveys for species protected under ESA will be conducted by qualified biologists to determine presence, absence, and habitat occupancy.

15. A Programmatic Agreement (PA) will be prepared setting forth the criteria for identifying, evaluating and managing cultural resources along the selected alternative. The parties to the agreement will likely include NorthWestern Energy, BLM, USFS, MDNRC, MDEQ, Idaho SHPO, Montana SHPO, and interested Tribes. Among other things, this PA would include: 1) the Area of Potential Effects (APE); 2) procedures for completing cultural resource survey within the APE; 3) procedures for evaluating the National Register eligibility of identified cultural resources; 4) steps in assessing effects; 5) appropriate measures for mitigating adverse effects on cultural resources that can not be avoided; 6) Tribal consultation procedures; 7) when, where, how, and by whom monitoring would be carried out; 8) appropriate responses to the discovery of unanticipated cultural resources during construction; 9) the contents and schedule for technical reports resulting from surveys, text excavations, data recovery excavations, documentation of historic structures, and other studies; and procedures for ensuring timely review by appropriate agencies throughout the process.